

I claim:

1. An herbal composition for oral hygiene, comprising an extract from *Heliopsis longipes* root in an amount sufficient to promote oral hygiene, and/or local anesthesia, "and/or desirable sensations to the oropharynx, and an oral carrier for said extract.

2. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is from about 0.5 mg to about 1000 mg.

3. The herbal composition of claim 2, wherein the amount of said extract is from about 10 mg to about 200 mg.

4. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is from about 0.01 to about 10 weight percent "relative to the composition".

5. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein said extract comprises "a wet component and a dry component.

6. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein said extract comprises "one of a powder and a paste".

7. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is sufficient to alleviate dry mouth.

8. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is sufficient to reduce bacteria present in an oral cavity.

9. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is sufficient to reduce dental caries.

10. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is sufficient to reduce halitosis.

11. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is sufficient to reduce periodontitis.

12. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is sufficient to reduce oral plaque.

13. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of said extract is sufficient to promote healing of, and/or reduction of symptoms of an oral lesion, including a mouth lesion, a stomatitis-induced lesion, and a herpes-induced lesion.

14. The herbal composition of claim 1, further comprising a sweetener.

15. The herbal composition of claim 14, wherein said sweetener is a sugar-free sweetener.

16. The herbal composition of claim 1, further comprising a flavoring agent.

17. The herbal composition of claim 1, further comprising a preservative.

18. The herbal composition of claim 1, further comprising a coloring agent.

19. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein said oral carrier is selected from the group consisting of a powder, a gel, a paste, a tablet, a capsule, a gum, a lozenge, a candy, a confection, an aerosol, ^{and} a fluid, and any other medicinally acceptable vehicle applied for the purpose of carrying or supplying the herbal composition to the oral cavity.

20. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein said oral carrier is selected from the group consisting of a candy, a chewable gum, an oral rinse, and a dentifrice.

21. The herbal composition of claim 20, wherein said oral carrier further comprises at least one additive selected from a group consisting of a texture-enhancement agent, a chewing-enhancement agent, a thickening agent, and a viscosity-enhancement agent.

22. The herbal composition of claim 19, wherein said oral carrier comprises a gum selected from a group consisting of arabic gum, chicle gum, guar gum, natural rubber gum, and any combination thereof.

23. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein said oral carrier has a solid exterior.

24. The herbal composition of claim 23, wherein said oral carrier is selected from the group consisting of a tablet, a capsule, a gum, and a lozenge.

25. The herbal composition of claim 23, further comprising a fluid, and wherein the solid exterior houses said fluid.

26. The herbal composition of claim ²⁵~~24~~, wherein at least one of the solid exterior and the fluid comprise a quantity of said extract.

27. The herbal composition of claim 1, wherein the amount of the extract is sufficient to promote oral hygiene for at least one minute.

28. The herbal composition of claim 27, wherein the amount of the extract is sufficient to promote oral hygiene for from about 5 minutes to about 2 hours or more.

29. An oral hygiene product comprising a container for the herbal composition of claim 1 and instructions describing the use of the herbal composition in the treatment of at least one condition selected from a group consisting of susceptibility to or presence of dry mouth, oral bacteria, dental caries, halitosis, periodontitis, oral plaque, and an oral lesion.

30. A method for promoting oral hygiene, comprising contacting the oral cavity with an herbal composition including an extract from *Heliopsis longipes* root in an amount sufficient to promote oral hygiene.

31. The method of claim 30, comprising contacting the oral cavity with the herbal composition in an amount sufficient to alleviate oral cavity dry mouth.

32. The method of claim 30, comprising contacting the oral cavity with the herbal composition in an amount sufficient to reduce oral cavity bacteria.

33. The method of claim 30, comprising contacting the oral cavity with the herbal composition in an amount sufficient to reduce oral cavity dental caries.

34. The method of claim 30, comprising contacting the oral cavity with the herbal composition in an amount sufficient to reduce oral cavity halitosis.

35. The method of claim 30, comprising contacting the oral cavity with the herbal composition in an amount sufficient to reduce oral cavity periodontitis.

36. The method of claim 30, comprising contacting the oral cavity with the herbal composition in an amount sufficient to reduce oral cavity plaque.

37. The method of claim 30, comprising contacting an oral lesion in the oral cavity with the herbal composition of claim 1 in an amount sufficient to alleviate the oral lesion, by promoting the healing thereof, and/or relieving the symptoms thereof.

38. The method of claim 30 comprising contacting the tissues of the oropharynx including the lips, gums, teeth, palates, tongue, throat, and upper respiratory passages with the herbal composition in an amount sufficient to cause local anesthesia, suppress coughing, and soothe inflamed tissues, as well as provide desirable sensations to these tissues.

39. The method of claim 30, wherein said contacting comprises periodically contacting the oral cavity with the herbal composition.

40. The method of claim 30, comprising providing the herbal composition in an amount sufficient to enhance and potentiate flavors of natural and artificial natures, and combinations of the same.

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